IN THE HIGH COURT OF HIMACHAL PRADESH, SHIMLA

Cr.A No.458 of 2004

Decided on : September 12, 2007

Jasbir Singh **…Appellant.**

Versus

State of H.P. **…Respondent.**

Coram

The Hon'ble Mr. Justice Surjit Singh, Judge.

The Hon'ble Mr. Justice Surinder Singh, Judge.

Whether approved for reporting?

For the Appellant : Mr. Ajay Kochhar, Advocate.

For the Respondent : Mr. Som Dutt Vasudeva, Additional Advocate General, with Mr. D.S. Nainta, Deputy Advocate General.

Surjit Singh, Judge(Oral)

HHC Nand Lal has brought the parcel containing the bulk case property and another sealed parcel containing one of the two samples. The parcel, containing *Charas*, is sealed. The seal impression on it reads "DJ Mandi". Parcel has been opened, because it is said to contain the haversack also which the appellant was allegedly carrying and in which the *Charas* was found. The *Charas* is to be weighed exclusive of that haversack. On the opening of the cloth cover of the parcel, a green coloured haversack has come out which contains some wearing clothes and a polythene bag containing *Charas*. The *Charas* has been weighed and found to be 2.195 kgs. Weighment has been done on the scale arranged from the dispatch section of the Registry of this Court. The stuff is ordered to be re-sealed with the seal of the Registry of this Court in the Court Room, in the presence of the

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Whether reporters of the local papers may be allowed to see the judgment?

Court Secretary, and the re-sealed parcel is ordered to be handed over to the abovenamed police official from Police Station Mandi.

2. Appellant has been convicted of an offence under Section 20(C) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, for allegedly being in exclusive and conscious possession of 2.300 kgs. of *Charas* and sentenced to undergo rigorous imprisonment for ten years and to pay a fine of Rs.1,00,000/-, in default of payment of fine to undergo simple imprisonment for a further period of six months.

3. On weighment of the *Charas*, the learned counsel for the appellant says that he has no submission to make, except that the *Charas* contained in the recovered stuff was equivalent to the percentage of resin found therein.

4. It is submitted by the learned counsel for the appellant that the appellant was sent up for trial for possessing *Charas* and the *Charas*, as per definition contained in sub-clause (a) of Clause (iii) of Section 2 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, means resin, in whatever form, whether crude or purified, obtained from cannabis plant and also includes concentrated preparation known as Hashish oil or liquid Hashish. It has been submitted that in the present case, as per report of the Chemical Examiner, the entire sample stuff was not resin or say *Charas*, but only a part of it, to the extent of 37.14 per cent, was resin and, hence, the appellant cannot be said to be in possession of 2.300 kgs. of *Charas*. He says that what was in possession of the appellant was not whole *Charas* but something which included *Charas* (resin) to the extent of 37.14 per cent only and the rest of the stuff was some unknown substance about which report of the Chemical Examiner is silent. He has taken us

through the report of the Chemical Examiner, per which the sample contained contents of *Charas.*

5. We find ourselves in agreement with the aforesaid submission of the learned counsel for the appellant. His submission is supported by the judgment, delivered by a Division Bench of this Court, in *Dharam Pal versus State of H.P. and another appeal (Latest HLJ 2007 (HP) 827)*. In the aforesaid case, it has been held that only the resin content of the stuff is *Charas* and that in the absence of the report of the Chemical Examiner about the rest of the contents of the stuff, the quantity of the *Charas*, based on the percentage of the resin found therein by the Chemical Examiner, is required to be worked out and the appellant-accused is to be held responsible for possessing *Charas* only to the extent, the stuff contained the resin content in it.

6. As noticed hereinabove, the total quantity of stuff recovered from the appellant was 2.300 kgs. The Chemical Examiner has found resin content in it to the extent of 37.14 per cent. That means the *Charas*/resin content in the recovered stuff was 854.22 grams. This quantity is less than the commercial quantity, as specified vide Notification No.S.O. 1055(E), dated 19th October, 2001, issued by the Central Government, even though more than the upper limit of the small quantity fixed by the same Notification. Thus, the appellant is liable to be punished not under Section 20(C) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, as done by the trial Court, but under Section 20(B) of the said Act for which no minimum sentence is prescribed. The offence under Section 20(B) is punishable with imprisonment that may extend to ten years and with fine which may extend to Rs.1,00,000/-. Looking to the quantity of resin/*Charas* found in the stuff recovered from the appellant, we feel that the ends of justice

would be met in case his sentence is reduced from ten years rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs.1,00,000/- to five years rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs.25,000/-, in default of payment of fine rigorous imprisonment for a further period of six months. We order accordingly.

7. Appeal stands disposed of.

(Surjit Singh), J

September 12, 2007(sd) **(Surinder Singh), J**